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THE AMERICAN
JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY

VOLUME XVI SEPTEMBER, 1910 NUMBER 2

THE HOUSING OF NON-FAMILY GROUPS OF MEN IN CHICAGO

MILTON B. HUNT
The Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

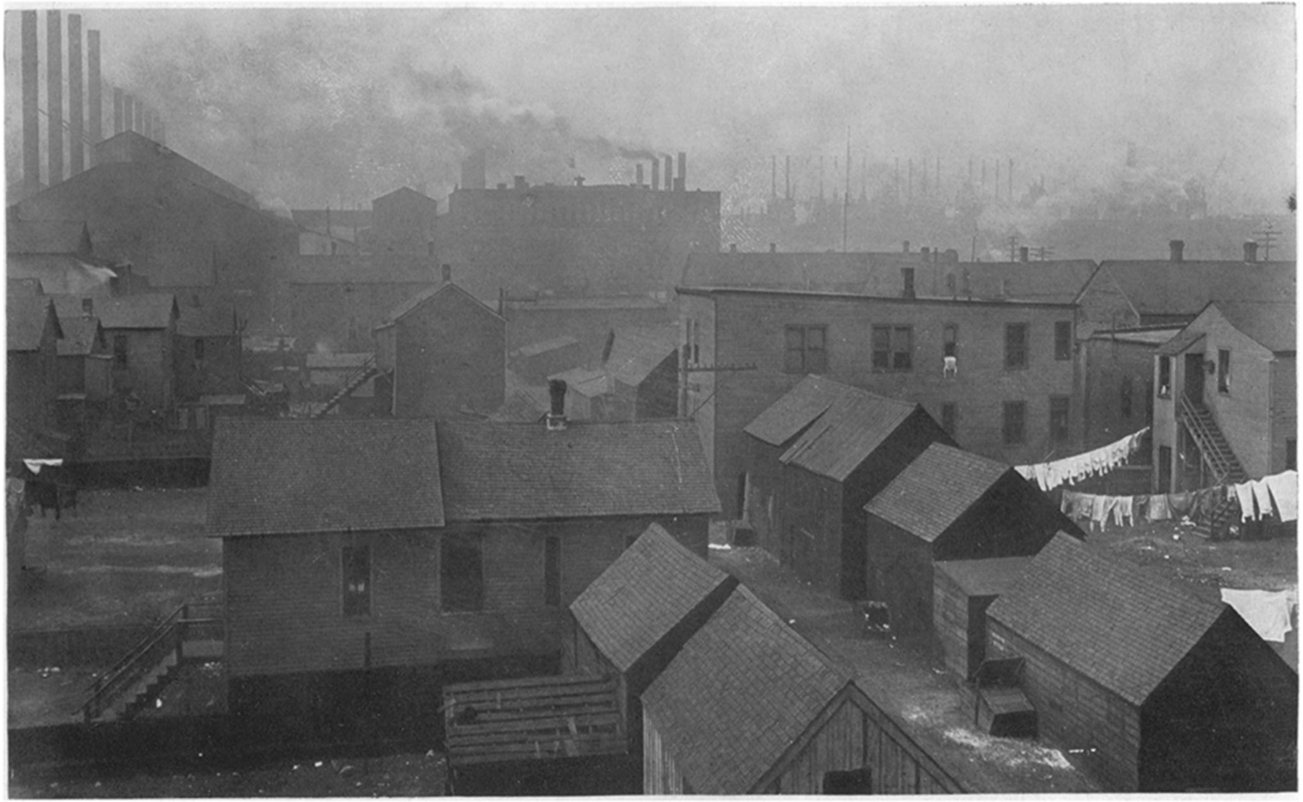
In the autumn of 1908 at the request of the Chief Sanitary Inspector of Chicago, the Department of Social Investigation (Russell Sage Foundation) of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy undertook an inquiry into housing conditions in Chicago. The following article is the result of one of the special investigations undertaken in connection with that inquiry. It was believed that problems of peculiar interest had grown out of the use of dwellings, designed for family occupation, by groups of persons of a non-family character. It was also felt that many facts of immediate community interest would be uncovered in an attempt to ascertain how non-family groups of industrial men were being housed. It should, however, be emphasized that this article deals only with the *bona fide* working-man, that it does not discuss the mode of life of the so-called "hobo" who makes use of the ten-cent lodging-house and finds his quarters, so far as he resorts to Chicago as a dwelling-place, in or near "the loop."

Of the type of man, however, with whom the following article has to do, little has been known. It is a matter of common knowledge, of course, that the great industrial plants, like the packing-houses and steel works, the agricultural implement factories, and other industries of that general type which require a very considerable amount of unskilled or low-grade labor, depend largely upon groups of immigrant men. It is also known that there are large numbers of men performing labor of the same general grade in connection with the construction work of the great railroad systems, the cutting of timber or ice in various sections of the country, and in construction work on our city streets, who can find employment only during the season of the year when their work is either possible or profitable. For many of these men who find employment from spring to autumn, Chicago is a winter resort. For many of those whose work takes them out into the lumber camps or ice fields from autumn to spring, Chicago is a summer home. In a number of cases, of course, members of these groups, men who have had a considerable period of employment in America, have been able to bring over their families. Their temporary or seasonal earnings are supplemented in many cases by the sewing or unskilled domestic work of their wives. In many cases, however, they have not yet been able to locate their families on this side, and during their periods of unemployment, they establish themselves with other members of their nationality in fairly permanent domestic relationships, after the fashion described in the following paper.

It is believed that the facts here given will have a real interest for the student of the city problem. In these facts there is to be found an illustration, of which, of course, many could be cited, of the way in which modern industry dominates all the aspects and conditions of life for those who are of the pecuniarily incompetent grade. Instead of work being a fact with other facts, controlled in a dignified and human way by the demands of the worker, we have here all the interests of the individual subject to the requirement that the opportunity for earning a wage shall be obtained by the worker. Family ties are broken, for a considerable time at least. The family habits of life, all normal association with women and children in simple and natural ways, are abandoned. Days pass into weeks, weeks into months, and months into years during which the worker is free from all the normal responsibilities and deprived of all normal satisfactions connected with family life. The conditions under which this life of an abnormal deprivation on the one hand and abnormal freedom from control on the other is passed, are those of hard, unremitting, uninteresting work amid sordid surroundings, recompensed by an inadequate wage, alternating with sleep and a period of leisure or unemployment, spent in crowded rooms, ill-ventilated, ill-lighted, poorly furnished, and as transient in their use as the clothes which the men wear and discard, or the unsound recreations in which they too frequently indulge.

S. P. Breckinridge
Edith Abbott

The rapid development within the last decade of the great industries in and near Chicago, the new railroad problems of the transcontinental lines which center in Chicago concerning track elevation within the city limits and construction work where the roads are being extended into new territory, the



Photograph by R. R. Earle

TYPES OF HOUSES NEAR THE STEEL MILLS IN SOUTH CHICAGO

In such as these Bulgarian, Servian, and Croatian lodging groups were found rehabilitation of the street railway system of a city covering an area of 194 square miles, the perfecting of the street surfaces and the gas and electric systems, and the construction of buildings both for commercial and household purposes have created an unprecedented demand for unskilled laborers who are willing to work in gangs. This demand has been met only by drawing on the supply furnished by newly arrived immigrants. So eager have they been in their response and so satisfactory in the quality and quantity of their labor that today the greater part of our rough work is done by men of foreign birth.

A large proportion of these men are married men who have left their homes and families to come here and work until they can save money enough to bring their families over and establish new homes in America. Such has been the practice of immigrants in the past, and according to the last report of the Commissioner General of Immigration,[1] there is a much larger number of males than females coming to our country among the immigrants of every nationality, with the exception of the Irish and Japanese. The proportion between male and female immigrants among different national groups varies almost directly with the length of time during which the nationality has been sending immigrants to America, so that those nationalities which have been sending immigrants longest show the smallest excess of men over women. In the case of the large groups of men who have left their wives behind, it is interesting to inquire by what domestic arrangement they replace the normal family life. Two arrangements seem to have been worked out: either the men attach themselves to a family group as lodgers or boarders, or they form a non-family group of their own. This may be organized either under a house-boss or on a co-operative basis. The predominance of the one kind of organization over the other again seems to depend largely on the length of time during which immigration of that particular nationality has been in progress, and the non-family type prevails among the most recently formed colonies, although even among those with whom immigration has the oldest history, one occasionally finds non-family groups.

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[1] *Report of Commissioner General of Immigration* (1909), 22.

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the methods of living among groups of immigrant men who had immigrated without their families, and to learn the types and condition of the houses in which they lived, the extent to which overcrowding was prevalent, the dimensions of their rooms, the rent, whether the men were a non-family group organized under a house-boss or on a co-operative basis, or whether they were boarders or lodgers with a family group, and other facts which might give some insight into their living conditions. While the study was primarily one of housing conditions, addtional facts of interest were gathered from the groups regarding their ages, social status, the length of their residence in the United States, their occupation, their wages, the length of their working hours, the method of payment prevailing in their industry, and the details of their group organization. An interpreter belonging to the nationality of the group visited was used in every case. Visits were usually made in the evening or on days when the men were most likely to be at home from their work so that as many of the men as possible might be seen in person.

While the study has not been extensive enough to cover all nationalities among which non-family groups might be found, yet the groups selected were those which are believed to be typical. Altogether, 96 groups, composed of 850 men, were visited, divided by nationality as follows: 25 groups of Bulgarians including 249 men; 33 groups of Croatians and Servians including 326 men; 33 groups of Italians including 236 men; and 5 groups of Greeks with 39 men.

An attempt will be made in the following pages to present separately the results of the investigation for each of these nationalities.

I. BULGARIAN GROUPS

Of large stature, with a ruddy complexion, fresh from the soil, the Bulgarians come to America capable of hard service and heavy labor. Without natural aptitude for commercial activities, they are especially well adapted for the labor gangs and are well able to endure the hard, rough work in our industrial plants. The way in which men who contribute as they do to American industrial well-being are able to maintain decent and wholesome conditions of living becomes a question of real interest.

The Bulgarians in Chicago are found grouped largely in two localities, one in the neighborhood of Adams Street where it crosses Peoria, Green, and Sangamon streets, just east of Halsted Street, and on some near-by streets parallel to Adams Street, the other at the gates of the steel mills in South Chicago. The first of these two is the center of interest to Bulgarians in Chicago. Here are the Bulgarian coffee-houses, the Macedonian bakeries, the Bulgarian grocers and butchers, the one-night lodging-houses, and the employment agencies. Here may be found Bulgarian newspapers and friends from home. Here the men come in the spring from the smaller cities and towns to be shipped out by the employment agencies. Here they return after finishing their work to wait for another job. In this neighborhood during the month of February, 1910, 13 visits were made and 105 men interviewed. Of these men, 58 were living under transient conditions, engaging rooms by the night or week only. The others were more permanent residents and rented their rooms by the month. The transient nature of the arrangements made in this neighborhood is evidenced by the fact that within an interval of 45 days a second visit was made to the headquarters of one of these groups and the personnel of the group had changed entirely.

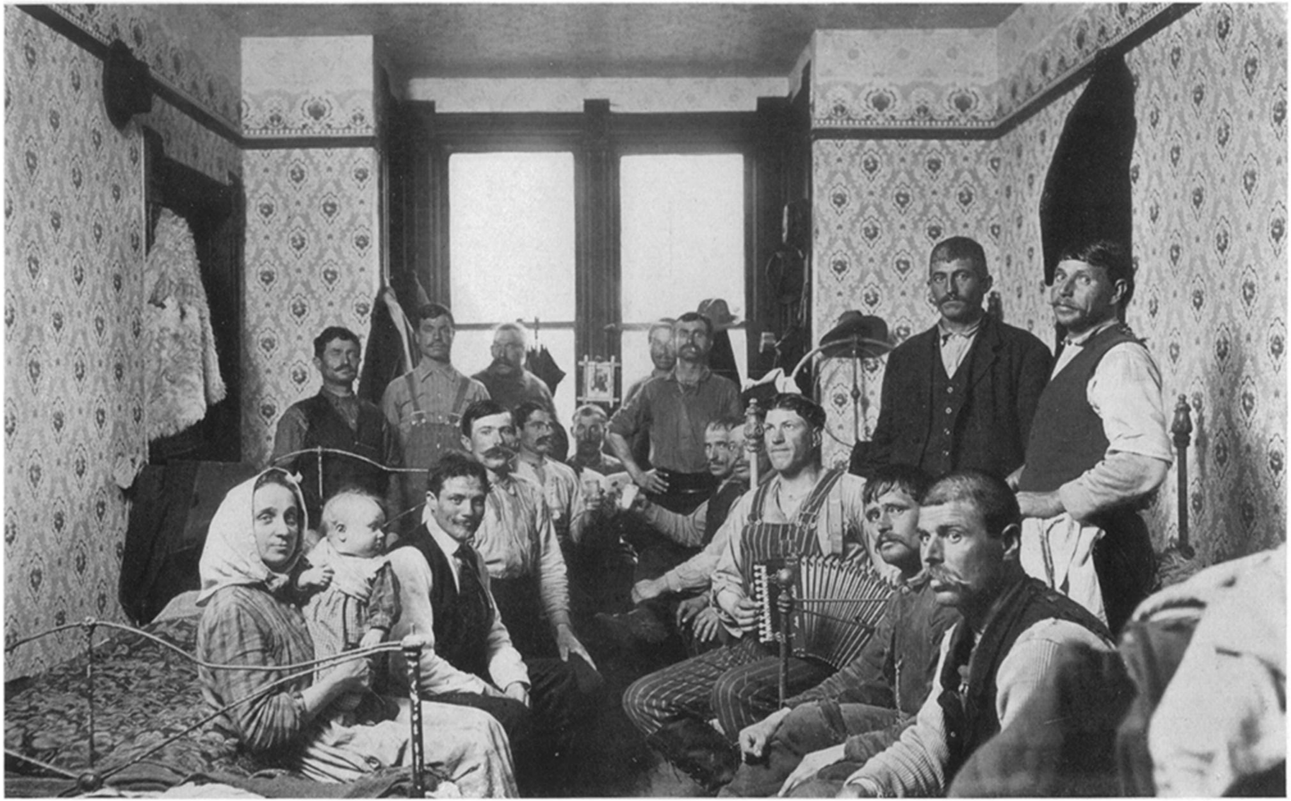
The other national center, as has been said, is in the midst of that mass of Slavic people representing many nationalities, who have gathered in a crowded colony at the gates of the steel mills in South Chicago. Here are Bulgarians, Croatians, Servians, Lithuanians, Poles, and men of many other nationalities. Sometimes several neighboring houses are inhabited by a single nationality, but more frequently one finds representatives of different nationalities within the same group. Almost all of the men living here depend for employment upon the steel mills.

With regard to household economy, the men were organized in a variety of ways. In the simple lodging-house, beds were let by the manager for ten cents a night. The men might get their meals with the owner in his restaurant-coffee-house, or they might shift for themselves. In other groups the men chose a boss who was responsible for the cooking, the washing, and the care of the rooms. Sometimes he did all this himself and received in return for his labor three dollars a month from each man. In case he did not wish to do all the work he hired a cook or sent out the washing. In two cases it was found that the boss had hired a Croatian woman to do the work for him. He usually owned the furnishings and paid the rent. He bought the food for the men and at the end of the month there was a general reckoning, and the food expense was divided pro rata among the men. Again, it was found that a Bulgarian man and his wife had together assumed the position as boss. In that case the woman did the work and the man collected from the men their share of the expense. Three dollars a month was usually paid by each man for lodging and cooking, and the food expense was divided equally among them so as to cover the cost of the woman's as well as their own. Still another plan was that of the simple co-operative group, in which the total expense was shared equally by all the members of the group. A fourth plan seemed the most profitable of all to the landlord.

NUMBER AND SIZE OF GROUPS IN SPECIFIED NUMBER OF ROOMS

Size of Apartment	Number of Groups of													Total
	4 Men	5 Men	6 Men	7 Men	8 Men	9 Men	10 Men	11 Men	12 Men	13 Men	15 Men	18 Men	19 Men	
1 room	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
2 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
3 rooms	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
4 rooms	..	..	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
5 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	2	3	..	1	..	8
6 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	1	1	1	7
Total number of groups	1	1	4	1	..	1	3	1	3	5	1	2	1	24
Total number of persons	4	5	24	7	..	9	30	11	36	65	15	36	19	261*

* Including 22 women and children and 1 Servian man.



Photograph by R. R. Earle

BULGARIAN LODGING GROUP IN SOUTH CHICAGO

Eighteen men and the "boss" in the apartment; six men slept in this room

According to this each man was charged 75 cents a week for the use of a room, where as many men as could be crowded together were lodged. The men thus herded together purchased each his own food and otherwise shifted for himself. There were 63 men found in simple co-operative groups, 167 were found living with a boss as manager, while 40 were found in the transient lodging-houses.

The table which has been given shows the number of persons constituting these groups into which they organize themselves, and the number of rooms in the apartments occupied.

II. CROATIANS AND SERVIANS

Men from both of these nationalities frequently live in the same lodging-house groups. The language is common to the two and those who call themselves Servians come either from the same portion of Austria from which the Croatians come, or from the neighboring kingdom of Dalmatia or Bosnia. In a group of 141 men who claimed to be Servians, there was not one who had come from the kingdom of Servia.[2] On this account it seems proper to present the facts about these two groups together.

Tall and broad shouldered, fairer than the Bulgarians and more nearly resembling the Poles, these men from the mountain farms of Austria and Dalmatia form a valuable addition to our workers, and the "Austrians," as our labor agencies call them, are eagerly sought for when work is hard and heavy.

The Croatian colony has its center near Eighteenth Street and Center Avenue on the west side of the city, within the limits of South Halsted Street, West Sixteenth Street, Blue Island Avenue, and West Twenty-second Street. In this neighborhood the Croatian newspapers are published, and there are also to be found a large Croatian church, Croatian lodge-halls, stores of all varieties kept by the Croatians, and, in fact, a complete national colony. This section is that within which may be found a part of the large Bohemian colony, now rapidly spreading to the westward, besides many Servians and Slovaks. An editor of one of the Croatian newspapers estimated the Croatian population of the city to be between 28,000 and 30,000, with probably 20,000 living in this one colony. There is another group of probably 3,000 on Archer Avenue, near Robey Street, in which there is also a Croatian newspaper published. Still others are to be found in South Chicago, near the steel mills, where men from both nationalities may be found in the same group.

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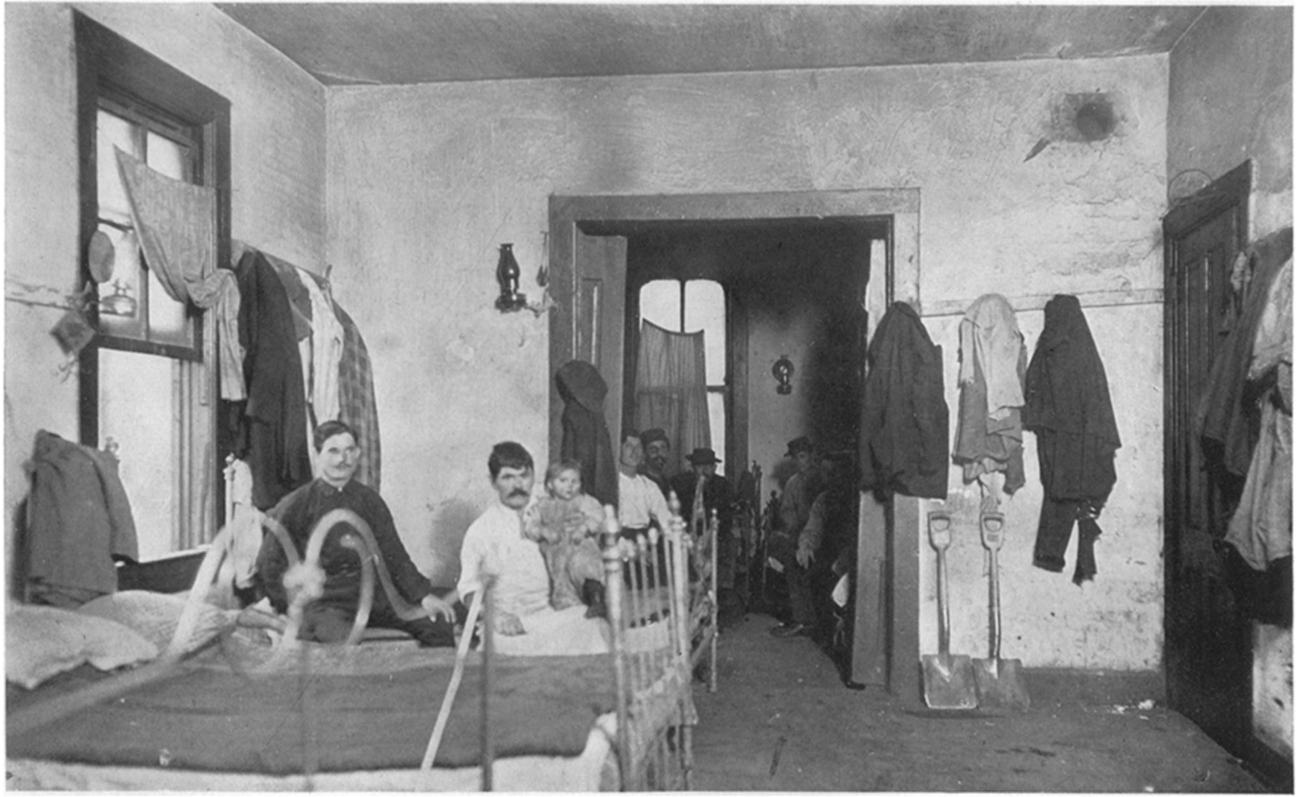
[2] As authority for their close relationship, see the statement made by Calhoun, *The Whirlpool of Europe*, 323: "There is no real distinction of race or language in this region inhabited by the Serve-Croats who spread across the Balkan states and through Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, to the country of the Slavenes." The present distinctions are based rather more upon political or religious grounds than upon racial or linguistic distinctions. The Servians are adherents of the Greek Orthodox faith, while the Croatians are Roman Catholics.

There are also two large Servian colonies. The larger is on Clybourn Avenue near Fullerton. A Servian newspaper is published in this locality, and there are Servian restaurants, stores, saloons, and lodge-halls in the neighborhood. The smaller is on Milwaukee Avenue near Wicker Park. It is an interesting fact that almost all the men in these colonies have come from Dalmatia, Bosnia, or Herzegovina.

Thirty-three groups, representing 183 Croatians and 141 Servians, of whom 82 came from Austria, and 59 from Dalmatia, were interviewed. This was done during the month of March when many of the men were unemployed. Detailed information was secured from groups from three of the colonies: the colony about Center Street, that in South Chicago, and that on Clybourn Avenue near Fullerton.

The size of these groups, including the few women and children living in them, and the number of rooms in the apartments occupied by each group are shown in the table given below.

Among these the most common type of living arrangement is for a married couple to own a boarding-house. They pay the rent and own the furniture and charge each man in the group about three dollars a month for his lodging, the preparation of his food, and his washing. The cost of food is divided proportionately each month among the men, the husband counting as one of the boarders. A cruder method of accounting is that of keeping a grocery book, in which the grocer or



Photograph by R. R. Earle

BULGARIAN LODGING GROUP, SOUTH CHICAGO

Eighteen men and the "boss" in five rooms the butcher enters every day the cost of the food bought for each individual. This means, in fact, a separate account with the grocer or the butcher for each boarder, and this he settles in person as often as necessary. The boarding mistress prepares and serves separately the food for each man, who receives exactly what he has paid for. There are, however, some groups in which the men pay a fixed sum each week. There are five co-operative groups, some with and some without a boss, but no one-night lodging-houses were discovered in these particular localities.

NUMBER AND SIZE OF GROUP IN SPECIFIED NUMBER OF ROOMS

Size of Apartment	Number of Groups of														Total Number of Groups
	4 Men	5 Men	6 Men	7 Men	8 Men	9 Men	10 Men	11 Men	12 Men	13 Men	14 Men	16 Men	17 Men	18 Men	
3 rooms	1	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
4 rooms	..	..	1	1	3	2	..	3	2	..	1	1	..	..	14
5 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	5
6 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	2	..	2	1	1	..	8
8 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
9 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
11 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Total no. of groups	1	..	1	1	3	3	5	3	5	1	4	3	2	1	33
Total no. of persons	4	..	6	7	24	27	50	3	60	13	56	45	34	18	377*

* Including 51 women and children.

III. ITALIANS

Another extremely interesting colony from the point of view of this study is constituted by the Italians, and it was possible to collect data with reference to more representatives of that nationality than of the others studied at this time. Although it is difficult to give exact boundaries to the Italian colonies in Chicago, they have definite centers and their general location may be easily indicated. The largest is probably that to be found within the boundaries formed by Canal Street on the east (it should be noted that many Italians may be found as far east as State Street), Harrison Street on the north, Center Avenue on the west, and Twelfth Street on the south. This section is of course by no means exclusively Italian, although it is predominantly so, for families of almost every other nationality may be found within it, and there are, in particular, large numbers of Greeks, Russian Jews, and Lithuanians.

A large colony of Sicilians is found in the area between Chicago Avenue and Division Street, with the river as the western and Sedgwick Street as the eastern boundary. Still another colony of Italians is near Grand Avenue, between Center and Halsted streets, but they are intermingled with large numbers of Greeks as well as with representatives of other nationalities located within this area. The fourth large colony is located near Twenty-second Street between Wentworth and Stewart avenues. Each of these colonies is complete in itself, with Italian newspapers, banks, churches, stores, saloons, and labor agencies. These Italian colonies are made up almost entirely of normal families and one has difficulty in finding groups of the non-family type.

The investigation of these groups was necessarily postponed until the month of May, when the labor agencies had shipped out thousands of men for work in the western construction camps. At this time, therefore, many entire groups had taken their mattresses and blankets and gone into the country. The Italian laborer is much shorter in stature than the Slav, yet he is capable of doing a good day's work with the pick and shovel or carrying hods of brick and mortar. With a natural dislike for the cold, he is constitutionally idle during the winter months, but as soon as spring comes he is ready to be shipped out and to earn enough to make up for lost time with the hope of being able to send something home to Italy, and to save enough to tide him over another winter. And, as almost every group reported that some of the men had gone to the country, there is no doubt that if the visits had been during the winter months, larger groups would have been found.

The groups visited were chosen from two colonies, that near Hull House and the one near Grand Avenue. In all, 38 visits were made and 237 men were interviewed.

The number of men within the groups, including families where they were found, with the number of rooms occupied, is given in the following table:

NUMBER AND SIZE OF GROUP IN SPECIFIED NUMBER OF ROOMS

Size of Apartment	Number of Groups of													Total
	2 Men	3 Men	4 Men	5 Men	6 Men	7 Men	8 Men	9 Men	10 Men	11 Men	12 Men	13 Men	14 Men	
1 room	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
2 rooms	2	..	..	1	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
3 rooms	..	1	2	1	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
4 rooms	..	..	1	1	3	2	..	2	2	1	..	..	..	12
5 rooms	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3
6 rooms	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	..	..	2	1	1	..	7
8 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
9 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total number of groups	3	1	4	5	6	6	3	2	2	3	1	1	1	38
Total number of persons	6	3	16	25	36	42	24	18	20	33	12	13	14	262*

* Including 26 women and children.

The organization of the Italian non-family group is unlike that of either the Bulgarian or Croatian. There are lodging-houses where ten cents provides a cot and some blankets for the night, but each man provides his own food. There are the co-operative clubs, organized in two different ways: according to one plan the men pay the rent and the necessary group expenditures co-operatively, but each man buys and cooks his own food; in the other they pay collectively for all expenses, including food, and each man in turn cooks for the group, or the one who arrives home first prepares the simple meal. In cases where the men board in the family group they pay the usual three dollars a month for rent and cooking and washing, and they either pay collectively for the food at the end of the month, counting as their own the food consumed by the woman, or each man buys his own food and brings it to the woman to be cooked. Of the 236 men interviewed, 151 lived in co-operative groups, while 85 were boarders in a family.

IV. GREEKS

With a rich heritage of custom and tradition, and a reputation as traders and colonists, the Greeks come to America with their commercial ability well developed, and serve in the ranks of laborers only long enough to learn the English language and to start in business for themselves in a small way. Then the commercial instinct asserts itself and they become peddlers or owners of bootblack stands, restaurants, fruit-stores, or other small places of business. In the bootblack shelter, the restaurant, or the fruit stand the Greek is found waiting upon his American customers. Large numbers of them are serving as peddlers of fruit and vegetables on our streets, and small groups are located in many different parts of the city near their places of business. But the largest central Greek colony is in the neighborhood of Hull House, east and west of Halsted Street, between Harrison and Taylor streets. Greek newspapers, a Greek church, Greek bakeries, Greek coffee-houses, all varieties of stores, are found in the immediate neighborhood. A smaller colony is near Grand Avenue, where it is crossed by Peoria and Sangamon streets.

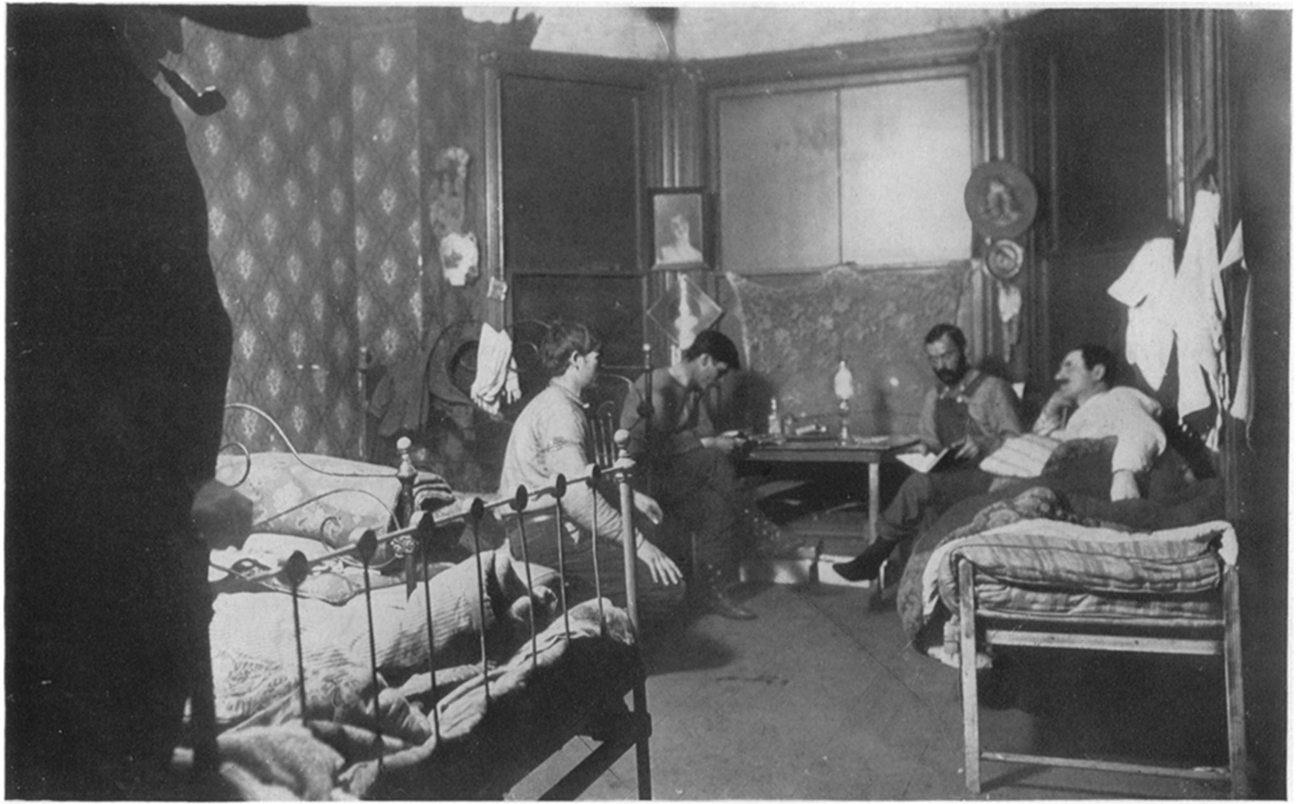
The attempt to investigate the non-family groups among the Greeks was confined to the colony in the neighborhood of Hull House. Four visits were made and 39 men interviewed. These were all men engaged in the fruit and vegetable business. The practice in all these instances was to rent a whole house, use the first floor as a stable for their horses, and sleep in an apartment above.

The size and number of the groups is indicated in the following table:

NUMBER AND SIZE OF GROUPS IN SPECIFIED NUMBER OF ROOMS

Size of Apartment	Number of Groups of				Total
	7 Men	8 Men	11 Men	13 Men	
4 rooms	1	..	..	..	1
5 rooms	..	1	..	1	2
8 rooms	..	..	1	..	1
Total number of groups	1	1	1	1	4
Total number of persons	7	8	11	13	39

Three of these groups were organized on a co-operative basis, all expenses being equally divided at regular intervals; in the fourth group, one man owned the entire building and



Photograph by R. R. Earle

BULGARIAN LODGING GROUP ON THE WEST SIDE

Five men occupied this room; windows open on the "elevated." Photograph taken by flashlight the other men rented rooms in which to sleep and space in the stable for their horses. The food was provided and paid for on a co-operative plan.

V. POLISH GROUPS

The study of the Polish lodging groups confirmed the fact that the longer the period of immigration, the smaller the number of non-family groups which would be found; for the Polish immigration is older than that of any of the other nationalities which have been described. In the district selected, there was not found a single non-family group. While in many instances the number of lodgers exceeded the number in the family with whom they lived, yet in every case there was a family as a permanent basis and the lodgers formed a temporary class, moving from group to group or from colony to colony in response to the demand for labor, or as their economic condition changed.

The Polish population constitutes one of the largest sections of the foreign element in the city and it is impossible to set any definite boundaries to the colonies. Certain centers, however, may be located which could be likened to Polish villages. These, however, either become Americanized or change in their national characteristics as one goes from the center to its points of contact with the outside world. The colony in the northwest part of the city has its densest Polish population about the St. Stanislaus Church, with the territory bounded by Ashland, Dickson, Holt, and Cleaver streets as the heart of the district. With this as a center, in every direction, except due east where the river serves as a barrier, the Polish population stretches out, intermingling with other nationalities, individuals continually moving to better localities as their economic status improves.

On the west side, on Seventeenth and Eighteenth streets, near Loomis Street and Ashland Avenue, the Poles are found, mingled with Bohemians and other Slavic nationalities. Throughout the whole territory this intermingling of Slavic people is so complete that it is difficult to distinguish one group from another.

Another large Polish colony is in that district spoken of as "back of the Yards" where successive colonies of Irish, Germans, Poles, Lithuanians, and, more recently, the Slavic races have forced their predecessors out of the buildings in the immediate neighborhood of the stockyards to a place more remote from the smoke and smell and into more desirable locations. The Polish people, who through thrift and economy are able to better their circumstances, are moving south and west from this locality, but the new arrivals board with the families near the yards, and here the lodging groups are found. Another small colony may be found east of Halsted Street, near Thirty-second and Thirty-third streets, intermingled with other Slavic groups.

As has been said, no strictly non-family groups were found. The Polish worker becomes a boarder in a family rather than one of a co-operative group. In these boarding groups there are frequently women boarders as well as men, the women usually being related to the man or wife in the family. As a rule the number of boarders found in the Polish family is not so large as the number constituting the group of boarders in families of other nationalities. A house to house canvas was made in 13 blocks in the stockyards district and in five blocks in South Chicago. The following table shows, as a result of this investigation, the number of families found and the number of lodgers in each family group:

NUMBER OF FAMILIES AND SIZE OF BOARDING GROUPS, BY DISTRICTS

District	Number of Families Having as Lodgers										Number without Lodgers
	1 Man	2 Men	3 Men	4 Men	5 Men	6 Men	7 Men	8 Men	9 Men	10 Men	
Stockyards	122	121	60	56	20	17	9	4	1	1	213
South Chicago	26	36	16	21	4	8	1	. .	. .	. .	66
Totals	148	157	76	77	24	25	10	4	1	1	279

The prevailing organization of the groups is simple. In most cases the boarder pays a stipulated rate; usually $3.00 a month for his room, his washing, and the preparation of his meals. The housekeeper keeps a special grocery book for each boarder, taking it to the grocer or the butcher, who keeps a separate account with each man. The woman frequently cooks and serves each man's food separately. This method is crude and involves a great deal of work, but it insures to each man exactly the amount of food he pays for. After the men have passed through the first stages of the Americanizing process they adopt the less cumbersome form of paying a specified sum each week for their food.

VI. GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS

The types of houses in which these groups of men live differ with the sections of the city in which they congregate. They are, in fact, found in every type of house from the one-story frame cottage, now moved to the rear of the lot to make room for a pretentious brick building, to the modern brick apartment. These groups most frequently select their apartments without regard to the type of building or its condition of cleanliness or repair. Groups are found in the small cottage, hidden and darkened by more imposing buildings in the front, unpainted, and neglected by landlord and tenant alike. Again they are found in the poorly built two-story frame building, hurriedly constructed after the "fire," now crowded, unpainted, and dingy, with outworn and inadequate sanitary arrangements. These dwellings are often almost ready to be condemned as unfit for habitation.

Again, groups of men are unexpectedly found within the "furnished rooms" district. Not infrequently they are to be discovered in a once-fashionable house, with high front steps and hand rails, finished within with large, high rooms, great doors, large windows, and marble fireplaces, furnished with old-fashioned beds, bureaus, and tables, and often still retaining the old-fashioned hanging lamp. They are also found in those districts in which many houses are now deserted by their former owners to make way for the industrial plants which are coming into the neighborhood, which suffer alike from neglect by the landlord and abuse by the tenant. Not infrequently they are found in the big brick block tenement houses, divided into monotonous apartments, unsanitary in construction, and dark and dirty within.

The Greeks visited had all chosen a house with a stable on the first floor where horses and wagons could be kept, and with rooms on the second or third floor for the men to live in. These houses were often poor in repair and unsanitary because of the stables beneath, but always clean and neat.

The question of rent is an interesting one, and the following tables show the rent paid and the number of rooms in the apartment.

These tables show little difference in the rents charged due to difference in nationalities. In the case of the Bulgarians,

BULGARIANS

Rents by Number of Rooms per Apartment*

Size of Apartment	Number of Groups Paying a Monthly Rent of												Total
	$8	$9	$10	$11	$12	$13	$15	$18	$20	$24	$30	No Report	
1 room	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	3
2 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
3 rooms	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
4 rooms	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3
5 rooms	..	2	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	8
6 rooms	1	..	1	1	1	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	7
Total	2	2	3	3	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	24

SERVIANS AND CROATIANS

Size of Apartment	Number of Groups Paying a Monthly Rent of										Total
	$6	$8	$9	$19	$11	$12	$14	$15	$22	No Report	
3 rooms	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
4 rooms	..	1	1	5	2	3	..	1	..	1	14
5 rooms	..	2	..	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	5
6 rooms	..	..	..	1	..	4	2	1	..	..	8
8 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
9 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
11 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Total	1	4	1	8	2	9	2	3	1	2	33

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*No table is given for Greeks because one group owned the house in which they lived and in the other cases the rents could not be ascertained.

ITALIANS

Size of Apartment	Number of Groups Paying a Monthly Rent of																Total
	$4	$5	$6	$7	$7.50	$8	$9	$10	$11	$12	$14	$15	$17.50	$18	$20	N.R.	
1 room	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
2 rooms	..	4	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
3 rooms	..	..	1	3	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	7
4 rooms	..	1	1	..	1	..	1	4	1	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	12
5 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	3
6 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	3	..	..	1	..	7
8 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
9 rooms	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Total	1	5	2	3	2	4	1	5	2	2	2	4	1	1	1	2	38

the rents seem very high compared with the accommodations. But here the landlord collected the seventy-five cent weekly payment for lodging, and thus when the rooms were full received a large total payment. Other differences[3] are probably

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[3] The following tables, showing the location of the buildings and of the apartment occupied by the groups, are given for completeness, although the numbers are too small to be anything more than suggestive.

LOCATION OF THE BUILDING IN WHICH GROUPS WERE FOUND

Nationality	Number of Groups in	
	Front Buildings	Rear Buildings
Bulgarians	21	3
Croatians and Servians	33	0
Italians	31	7
Greeks	1	3

FLOORS ON WHICH GROUPS WERE FOUND

Nationality	Number of Groups in Apartments on			
	First Floor	Second Floor	Third Floor	Basement
Bulgarians	16	5	2	1
Croatians and Servians	11	17	4	1
Italians	12	14	4	7
Greeks	0	4	0	0

due to location, nearness to the business district, and other factors normally determining rents.

The question of jurisdiction over the sanitary problems growing out of the living conditions of groups of this kind seem to be somewhat complicated. The city building department regulates the construction of tenements as well as of lodging-houses and hotels, and the building code formulates rules to which the buildings shall conform. The city law, then, designates a minimum floor area for rooms,[4] and a minimum air space;[5] it also provides for a minimum window area of not less than 10 per cent of the floor space to open to the air.[6] Similar regulations are in force in the case of tenement houses.[7] In houses whether new or already constructed in 1901, the code prohibits the use of any room for sleeping purposes by more than one person for each 400 cubic feet of air space.[8] Its definition of a lodging-house is a house where rooms are rented for periods of a week or less.[9] All other apartments would come under tenement-house regulations provided there was more than one apartment in the building.[10] The state Board of Health provides for the regular inspection of lodging-houses and for an annual statement to the county clerk of the number of rooms, the size in cubic feet of the largest and the smallest, the number of guests at the time of the statement, the largest and smallest number of guests at any time during the year, and other details. Managers are supposed to keep a register open to authorized officials.[11] The regulations regarding crowding are found in the following provisions of the statute:

> It shall be unlawful for any landlord, proprietor, manager or clerk of any lodging-house, boarding-house, tavern, inn or hotel to permit any room in such lodging-house, boarding-house, tavern, inn or hotel to be used or occupied for sleeping purposes which does not contain four hundred (400) cubic feet or more of air space for each person sleeping therein at the same

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[4] Tolman's Municipal Code, sec. 417.

[5] *Ibid.*, sec. 417.

[6] *Ibid.*, secs. 1222, 273, 413.

[7] *Ibid.*, sec. 1221.

[8] *Ibid.*, sec. 1221.

[9] *Ibid.*, sec. 1233.

[10] *Ibid.*, sec. 389.

[11] Illinois Revised Statutes, chap. 126A, sec. 15.

> time, and in every room in any lodging-house, boarding-house, tavern, inn or hotel containing more than one bed, the beds shall be so arranged as to have a passage way of not less than two feet horizontally on all sides of each bed. And all beds shall be so arranged that under each of them the air shall freely circulate, and there shall be adequate ventilation.

Just what the definition of a lodging-house is, is not given in the statute, and whether or not the groups described in this paper would fall under the jurisdiction of the state is uncertain, and it cannot be said whether a family who have two lodgers or two rooms to rent for irregular periods, or a man and wife with a house full of lodgers, or a co-operative group hiring a house by the month would or would not come under the jurisdiction of the Board of Health.

Out of 484 rooms visited, 10 were found to have an area of less than fifty square feet, while 179 had between fifty and one hundred.

Crowding and lack of cleanliness go hand in hand. Whereever there is a large group of working men to whom domestic life is impossible, the rooms in which they live are inevitably dirty and ill-kept. If the groups are boarding with a woman who keeps the house and does the work, conditions are somewhat better, although in a large group the demands upon a woman leave her little time for cleaning. Because of the habits encouraged by the conditions under which the men work on the railroad or in the mills, the standard of cleanliness in their living quarters is lower than in a normal family group.

This table shows to what a large extent the apartments

NATIONALITY	NUMBER OF PERSONS SLEEPING IN ROOMS WITH THE FOLLOWING NUMBER OF CUBIC FEET PER PERSON								TOTAL
	Less than 100	100 to 150	159 to 200	200 to 250	250 to 300	300 to 350	350 to 400	400 or over	
Bulgarians	...	8	5	34	40	47	53	74	261
Croatians and Servians	...	3	36	41	65	85	37	110	377
Italians	...	2	30	30	49	57	16	78	262
Greeks	...	..	..	..	9	5	6	19	39
Total	...	13	71	105	163	194	112	281	939*

* Includes 89 women and children.

are crowded beyond the minimum set by legal requirement, viz., 400 cubic feet for each person.

The following table shows the number of men actually found making use of the separate rooms for sleeping purposes:

Nationality	Number of Rooms in Which Were Found						
	1 Man	2 Men	3 Men	4 Men	5 Men	6 Men	7 Men
Bulgarians	10	26	11	16	7	9	..
Croatians and Servians	4	36	11	26	3	17	..
Italians	21	37	17	6	2	6	1
Greeks	4	8	3	1	..	1	..

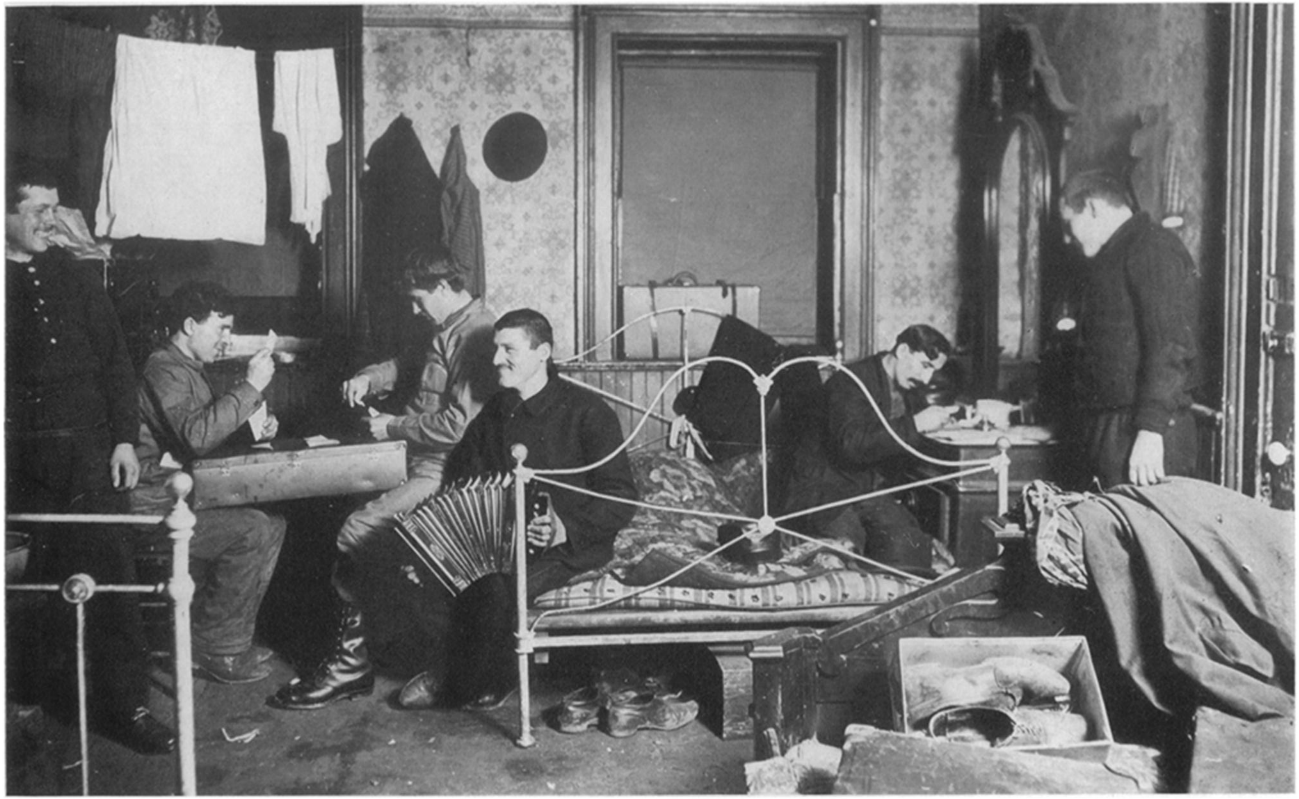
These figures indicate the number of men found. In many cases beds and couches were placed in the rooms for more men than were actually found at the time of the visit. That these beds were made use of just as all the rooms in a hotel are used at times, is shown by the fact that several second visits were made to the apartments and in rooms in which there were empty beds at the time of the first visit, at the time of the second all the beds were found filled, and in one place mattresses had been placed on the floor.

The following table shows the number of men for whom the rooms were actually fitted up, but not actually in use at the time of the visiting.

NUMBERS OF MEN AND NUMBERS OF GROUPS FOR WHICH ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SLEEPING WERE FOUND

Nationality	Number of Rooms in Which Provision Was Made for										
	1 Man	2 Men	3 Men	4 Men	5 Men	6 Men	7 Men	8 Men	9 Men	10 Men	11 Men
Bulgarians	4	22	6	20	5	11	3	4	..	..	..
Croatians and Servians	10	34	16	24	3	10	..	..	..	..	..
Italians	14	37	18	9	5	6	2	..	..	..	1
Greeks	4	7	4	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..

By actual measurement the following number of rooms were found to be of dimensions less than those required by law for the numbers found sleeping in them, and if the rooms had been filled many others would have been added.



Photograph by R. R. Earle

BULGARIAN LODGING GROUP ON THE WEST SIDE

Nine men in two rooms

Nationality	Number of Rooms under Size Prescribed by Code		Number of Rooms if Filled as Accommodations for
	Number	Percentage	
Bulgarians	49	46	15
Croatians and Servians	61	37	12
Italians	67	35	11
Greeks	5	24	0

The building code outlaws a windowless room, and provides that no room (except an alcove room) be built without access to the outside air. This provision applies only to buildings erected after December, 1901, although the code prescribes certain conditions for rooms constructed before that time.[12] It also prescribes that the window areas shall be equal to one-tenth of the floor area.[13] In all the rooms visited, which happened to be in houses erected prior to 1901, the measurements of the windows were taken. Five with no windows, nine with no windows opening on the outside air, were found, while in 34 the window space was below the legal requirement.

In addition to the facts with reference to their housing, it was not difficult to secure information as to the age and marital status of these men whom our industrial organization induces to take up the unnatural mode of life which has been described. The first table shows that they are in the prime of early manhood, able to give of their greatest vigor to the unskilled toil by which they are initiated into American industrial life.

NUMBER OF MEN AND AGES

Nationality	Under Twenty Years		Twenty Years and under Thirty		Thirty Years or over		Total*
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Bulgarians	9	4	134	56	96	40	239
Croatians and Servians	10	3	222	70	94	17	326
Italians	18	8	124	53	94	39	236
Greeks	2	5	22	56	15	39	39

* In ten cases the age of the men could not be ascertained.

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[12] Municipal Code, sec. 419.

[13] *Ibid.*, sec. 413.

As has been said, although they are living here in non-family groups, many of these men are married. There is said to be an interesting difference in the way in which marriage affects the conduct of men. The Croatian men are said to be more eager to seek their fortunes in America when they have assumed the responsibilities of marriage, while among the Servians it is the unmarried men mostly who take these chances in a new country.

Among the Italians the men were looking forward with assurance to the time when their wives and families could join them here, and not infrequently a man when questioned was found expecting his family within a few days.

Among the Greeks the immigrant is more often the young unmarried man who is hoping to make his fortune here and then return to Greece to enjoy it.

The following table shows the proportion of married and single men in the groups:

Nationality	Number of Men				Total*
	Married	Percentage	Single	Percentage	
Bulgarians	167	70	72	30	239
Croatians	110	58	74	42	184
Servians	66	47	76	53	142
Italians	131	55	105	45	236
Greeks	7	20	32	80	39

* In ten cases the social status could not be ascertained.

An interesting question was suggested as to the intention of newer immigrants with regard to bringing their families over, when as yet few of their fellow countrymen had been able to bring their families over. In the case of the Bulgarians, the members were therefore questioned regarding their expectations. Many of these men were distinctly discouraged and reported real difficulty in caring for themselves alone. But they reported that if conditions improved they hoped to be able to establish their families in America.

VII. EMPLOYMENT

The interesting questions with reference to employment are: first, the amount of unemployment due to the season or the nature of the work done; second, the number of hours worked a day and the arrangement for shifts; third, the rates of wages paid; fourth, the time and medium of payment. Upon these points a few data were obtained which are believed to be of interest and are given here.

The proportion of men found idle in the different groups varied according to the season at which they were visited. Unfortunately it was not possible to visit all of the nationalities during the same period. The Bulgarian, Croatian, and Servian groups were visited during the winter months at a time when work was dull. On the other hand, the Italian and Greek groups were visited during the month of May after thousands of idle men had left the city for the camps and after much of the work which had been suspended during the winter had begun again. The numbers of men and the industries in which they were employed is shown in the table which follows:

Nationality	Number of Men Employed in						Others	Unemployed	Total*
	Steel Mill and Cranes	R. R.	Streets*	Building	Harvester Works	Own Account			
Bulgarians	61	55	10	..	..	..	2	111	239
Croatians	158	2	31	..	27	..	43	65	326
Italians	..	104	54	29	..	6	36	7	236
Greeks	..	2	..	..	..	35	2	..	39

* This includes work done by contractors at paving, concrete work, laying of gas pipes, work by the street railroad, or any work done upon the streets.

The following tables show for each group the rates of wages received and the number of hours which the men were working at the time the visits were made.

It may be said by way of comment on these tables that the rates were not especially low and that the discouragement of the men referred to in an earlier portion of the paper was due to the irregularity of their employment rather than to an unduly low wage scale. Unfortunately no accurate data could be obtained as to the actual number of days worked during the year.

NUMBER OF MEN WHO EARNED PER HOUR THE FOLLOWING WAGES

BULGARIANS

Hours per Day	−10c.	10c.	11c.	12c.	15c.	16c.	16.5c.	17c.	17.5c.	18c.	18.5c.	20c.	20–25c.	25–37c.	37.5c.	P W.*	O.A.†	N.R.‡	37.5c.+	
8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
10	...	...	...	...	...	16	36	...	8	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	62
12	...	...	...	...	...	...	32	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	32
	...	...	...	...	...	16	68	...	30	...	...	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	128

CROATIANS AND SERVIANS

	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22	...	22
9	...	...	...	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
10	...	...	...	...	38	75	3	...	40	6	...	5	1	...	...	13	...	...	...	181
11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
12	...	...	...	...	...	29	9	...	7	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	48
13	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
	...	...	...	2	38	104	14	...	51	7	...	6	4	...	...	13	...	22	...	261

ITALIANS

8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	37	...	...	...	6	47
9	...	...	1	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1	17	3	...	...	...	...	...	26
10	1	1	...	...	17	25	11	5	60	...	3	5	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	139
12	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
13	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
P. W*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	6
O. A.†	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	6
	1	1	1	3	19	26	12	5	61	...	4	6	28	7	37	6	6	...	6	229

GREEKS

O. A†	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	35	...	...	35
8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	1	...	35	...	...	39

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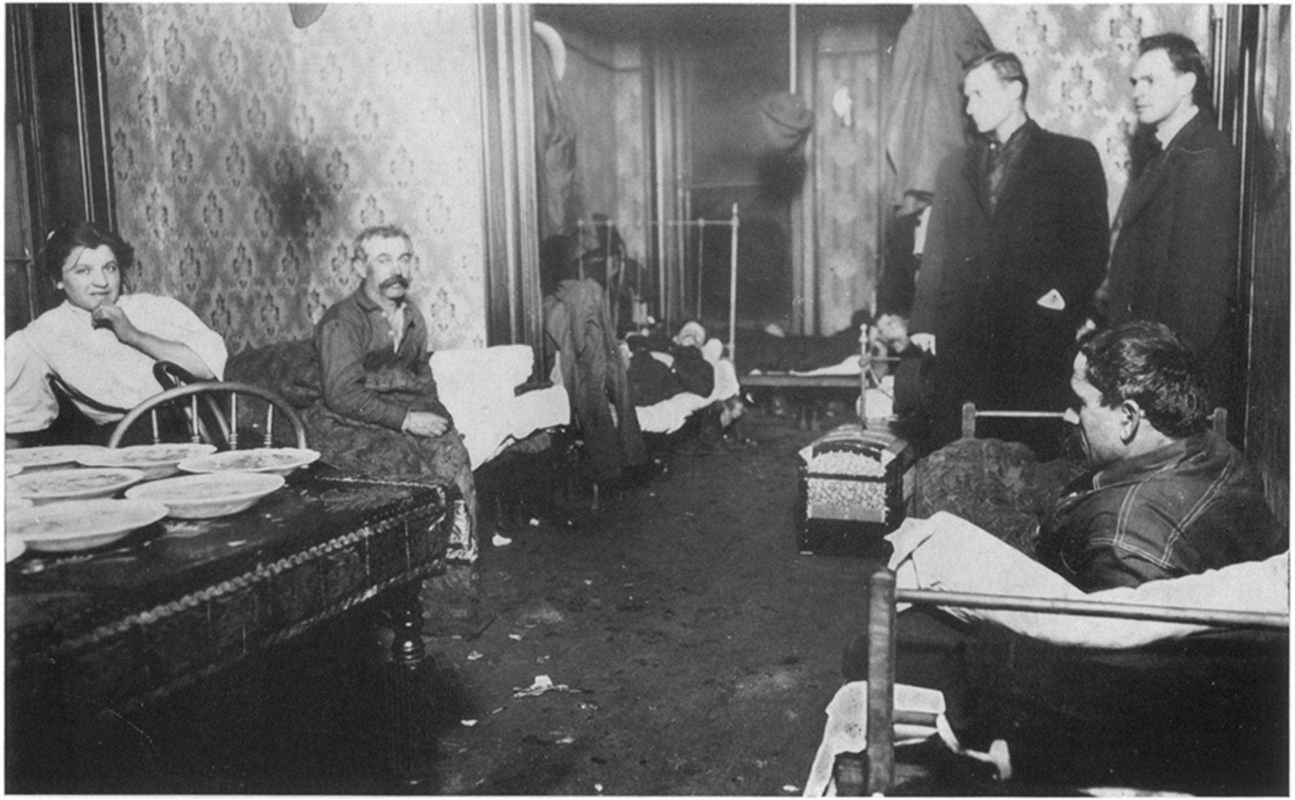
* P. W.=Piece work.

† O. A.=Own account.

‡ N. R.=No report.



Photograph by R. R. Earle

SERVIAN LODGING GROUP ON THE WEST SIDE

Nine men in two rooms. A man and his wife act together as "boss"; the woman had prepared soup for breakfast, and the twelve plates were found on the table ready for breakfast (photograph taken at 10 P.M.)

The following table shows the number of men who were paid at weekly, fortnightly, or monthly intervals.

NATIONALITY	NUMBER OF MEN				TOTAL
	Paid Weekly	Paid Fortnightly	Paid Monthly	Working on Own Account	
Bulgarians	..	77	51	..	128
Croatians and Servians	20	241	..	..	261
Italians	61	68	94	6	229
Greeks	..	2	2	35	39

A table is also given showing the number of men whose wages were held in arrears one week, from seven to fifteen days, and from fifteen days to a month.

NATIONALITY	NUMBER OF MEN WHOSE WAGES WERE HELD BACK				TOTAL
	1 Week	7–15 Days	15 Days	1 Month	
Bulgarians	17	95	16	..	128
Croatians and Servians	18	241	2	..	261
Italians	107	58	58	6	229
Greeks	4	..	..	35	39

According to these tables the Italian is receiving the best wage and working the shortest hours. This may again be due to the fact that the visits were made at different seasons of the year, for the supply and demand for labor obviously affect the wages, but a more probable reason is that the Italian has been here longer and has learned the language and has been able to take advantage of the work of the labor organizations. Many of the Italians working for contractors on the streets, and all of the men working at the building trades were union men.

In the steel mills at the time when the Bulgarian and Croatian groups were visited, the wages paid were 16 cents an hour for laborers. Two shifts were maintained, a ten-hour day and a twelve-hour night shift, with the same wages for each. The men alternated shifts each week, and at the time of changing, one group worked the double shift (both the day and the night shift), while at the time of shifting the next week that shift was laid off for 24 hours. Payment was made every fifteen days, by checks which were good in any store or bank, with no exchange charged. In one of the mills a voluntary insurance company was maintained by the company, and men who were willing to join were preferred as employees.

The work on the railroad varied according to the employing company and the kind of work done. The working day was ten hours, and the wages varied from $1.50 to $1.75 per day. By almost all the companies wages were paid monthly by checks, about a fortnight's wages being held in arrears. The cashing of these checks is a serious problem for men working in camps in the country.

It is evident that those working in the building trades had by far the best wages and hours. The men were hod-carriers and strongly organized and had gained an eight-hour day and a three-dollar wage.

No attempt is made to set out plans for remedying the conditions described. Obviously the problem is one in world industry as well as in local sanitation. It may be said, however, that in the machinery of the city Health Department and in the intelligent use of inspectional visits, combined with instructions upon sanitary matters, there could be formed an agency little utilized as yet. Inspectors who would interest the men in the hygienic side of the question would find a welcome response among many of the groups; for frequently questions were asked by the men as to the number who could sleep in a certain room without danger to their health. A method of ticketing the rooms or placarding on the doors has been tried very successfully in many cities and might be beneficial with many of the groups if the placards were printed in the language of the groups and if the co-operation of the men was secured.